

species in Maine, though it has once been detected at Pine Point in January.\*

Robins wintered in unusual numbers in and about the city.

A single flock of Cedarbirds (about twenty in number) appeared on February 6.

But the most interesting result of the mild season was the wintering of *Colaptes auratus*. As a rule this species withdraws very early in November, although my brother saw a straggler on November 13, 1881.† Yet while most of the birds disappeared in the autumn of 1888 about the usual time, I saw a single individual (perhaps the same one) almost every day up to December 18. After that date I met with no more until January 1, 1889, when I found a bird feeding on the berries of a mountain-ash tree within the City limits. A friend reported one on Cape Elizabeth on January 3, and Mr. Luther Redlon, of Portland, an accurate observer of birds, saw one in the Portland 'Oaks' on February 10. I met with one again on February 16, and also on the 25th of the same month. From the latter date up to March 1, not a day passed without my meeting with one. It may be worth while to note that all the birds seen after the first of November were males. So far as I am aware the Flicker has not before been known to winter in Maine, though Mr. Everett Smith has recorded ‡ the capture of a single bird at Fort Popham, in January, 1885.—JOHN CLIFFORD BROWN, *Portland, Maine*.

---

## CORRESPONDENCE.

### A Suggestion to the A. O. U. Committee on the Revision of the Check-List of North American Birds.

TO THE EDITORS OF THE AUK:

*Dear Sirs:*—Perhaps no more important and beneficial advance has ever been made in North American ornithology than the publication by the American Ornithologists' Union of a 'Check-List' which at once became an authoritative standard and assures us of a uniformity and probable fixity of nomenclature before impossible. With intense satisfaction, therefore, should we view a continuance of this work in the labors of the committee whose duty it has become to annually revise the productions of the preceding year and give to the Union the results of their deliberations.

But with how much more pleasure should we regard this committee's

---

\* See Goodale, *Auk*, Vol. II, p. 16.

† See *Proc. Port. Soc. Nat. Hist.*, Dec., 1882.

‡ *Forest and Stream*, February 5, 1885.

labors, if not alone the results, but also the methods by which they were reached, were given to the the public. To the ornithologist of today, this is perhaps of minor importance. Still he may desire to know why certain proposed races or species were rejected, while the ornithologist of the future, unaware of the facts which have influenced each decision, may desire to judge for himself, and the non-appearance of any data which have governed this committee in its examinations, causing them to ignore certain proposed changes and alter or adopt others, will, to say the least, be to him somewhat confusing. Would it not be well, therefore, if in addition to its report, this committee also publish an abstract of its proceedings, either as an appendix, as a special paper in this magazine, or in such other manner as it may deem best?

Very respectfully,

FRANK M. CHAPMAN.

*Am. Mus. Nat. Hist., New York City.*

---

## NOTES AND NEWS.

DR. JEROME HENRY KIDDER, one of the original members of the A. O. U., died in Washington, D. C., on April 8, in his forty-ninth year, after a short illness from pneumonia. Dr. Kidder was honored with a membership in the A. O. U. for his very creditable ornithological work in connection with the Transit of Venus Expedition to Kerguelen Island in 1874, to which he acted as surgeon and naturalist. His report, prepared in conjunction with Dr. Coues, was published in 1876, as Bulletin No. 3 of the U. S. National Museum, and entitled 'Contributions to the Natural History of Kerguelen Island,' and 'A Study of *Chionis minor* with reference to its Structure and Systematic Position.' Dr. Kidder was graduated at Harvard College in 1862, and from this date till 1883 was in the military and naval service of the United States, first as a military cadet in the hospitals near Baltimore during the War of the Rebellion, and later as assistant surgeon and surgeon in the U. S. Navy. In 1883 he resigned his commission for special service with the U. S. Fish Commission under Professor Baird. Later he was made Assistant Commissioner under Professor Goode, but soon after resigned to accept an important position in the Smithsonian Institution. In later years his special line of professional work was in the direction of sanitation and hygiene, in which he made many important researches. About a year before his death he sent in his resignation as a member of the A. O. U., on the very conscientious ground that as he was no longer doing work in ornithology he felt it was not right for him to hold a position of honor to which others were so much better entitled. Personally Dr. Kidder was a great favorite with his social and scientific associates, to whom his sudden death was a great shock.